

# THE PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

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## I. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SEMINARY CURRICULUM.<sup>1</sup>

I AM disposed to look upon the subject the discussion of which I have been asked to open, as a practical rather than as a purely theoretical one. One result of this mode of looking at it will be that we shall approach it from the point of view of our existing institutions, and ask, not what is the ideal curriculum for theological study, but what is the ideal and what the practicable curriculum for such institutions as our theological seminaries actually are.

The fundamental facts here, I take it, are three.

(1), Our theological seminaries are not the theological departments of universities, but training schools for the Christian ministry. That is to say, the object they set before themselves is fundamentally a practical one. They do not exist primarily in order to advance theological learning, but in order to impart theological instruction; their first object is not investigation, but communication; and they call their students to them, not that these may explore the unknown, but that they may learn the known in the sphere of theological truth. They do not exist primarily, again, in order to place in reach of all who may be interested in theological thought facilities for acquiring information concerning whatever department of theological learning each inquirer may for the moment desire to give his attention to; but in order that they may provide for a select body of young men, who

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<sup>1</sup> A paper read before the "General Association of the Professors of the Theological Seminaries of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America," June 3, 1896.

saved." Such a doctrine could not have come from the lips that spoke those words to the robber on the cross. Such a commission was not given to the other apostles by him who did not send Paul to baptize, but to evangelize. (1 Cor. i. 17.) It is true that in the parallel in Matthew mention is made of baptism; but there the emphasis is not upon the baptism simply, but upon the modifying clause, "into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." And, in general, it is not that the different statements here might not, any one of them, be understood in a sense in harmony with the teaching that is of authority, if they occurred in certain contexts, but that, as they lie here, they together contradict the authoritative teaching.

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#### EFFECTUAL CALLING—REGENERATION.

SUCH is the title of No. 13 of "The Shorter Catechism Course," by Dr. Beattie, in the *Observer* of July 29th. As we take issue with Dr. Beattie on one point, it is best to have the Catechism citations and the Doctor's own words before us. The *italics* are ours:

"29. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ by the effectual application of it to us by his Holy Spirit.

"30. The Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.

"31. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel."

"It is *worth while* noting the *fact* that the Catechism does *not* use the term *regeneration*, which theologians use so much in this connection. At first sight this may appear to be a defect in the Catechism, but a little examination of the questions set down at the head of this article will show that what the theologians term *regeneration* is there described under *effectual calling*."

We are glad that Dr. Beattie has called attention to the *fact* that the Catechism does not countenance the use of the word "regeneration" as a synonym for effectual calling. Nor can we look upon this omission as a defect in the Catechism. Neither the Catechism nor the Scriptures identify regeneration and effectual calling. In Question 31

the Catechism defines effectual calling, and does not define regeneration.

Let us note a few propositions :

1. By natural birth a soul is in Adam.

2. Only that soul has been regenerated which is in Christ. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." (2 Cor. v. 17.)

3. A soul is in Christ only when it has been baptized into Christ.

4. The soul is baptized into Christ with the Holy Spirit by Jesus himself. "One baptism." (Ephesians iv. 5.) "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." (Mark i. 8.) "Baptism doth also now save us." (1 Pet. iii. 21.) "By (with) one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. xii. 13.) "Baptized into Jesus Christ." (Rom. vi. 3.)

5. This one only baptism takes place at the moment when the Spirit finishes the work of effectual calling by working faith in us.

"We are all the children of God *by faith* in Christ Jesus." (Gal. iii. 26.) "To as many as received him to them gave he the right to become the *sons* of God, even to them that *believe* on his name." (John i. 12.) "This spake he of the Spirit which they that *believe* on him *should receive*." (John vii. 39.) "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of *faith*?" (Gal. iii. 2.)

Effectual calling precedes regeneration.

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[NOTE.—The above anticipates a very full treatise on the subject, which has been for a short time in the hands of the editors of the QUARTERLY awaiting publication.]